

Integrating Succession and Gender Issues from the Perspective of the Daughter of Family Enterprise across the U.S. and EU

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Paper aim and contribution

- Family daughter's viewpoint
 - Perceptions and intentions as she considers her career options, including leadership in her family's enterprise
- Changing role of women in society
 - Increasing role and acceptance of women in leadership
 - Engagement of daughters in the family business management process, key stakeholder status
- Gender analysis
 - A complicated set of issues faced by daughters
 - Gender as a socially constructed phenomenon
- Toward an international understanding
 - Two exploratory empirical research projects (U.S. - EU)



Presentation outline

- Conceptual grounding
 - Influence of gender dynamics on the family business
 - Career aspirations of family business daughters
- Results of exploratory empirical research
 - Qualitative interviews in the EU
 - Survey process in the US
- Discussion on gender and the daughters' position
- A research agenda
- Conclusion
 - Implications for public and private initiatives



Influence of gender dynamics on the family enterprise

- Daughters' role in light of a socially constructed environment
- '*The family does gender*', expectations about the daughter's role, not always appropriate / attractive
 - Psychological barriers to the participation of daughters in leadership
 - Daughters as 'invisible', 'default' successors
 - Access to resources, including training and mentoring
- Ease and success in assuming the leadership role
 - Daughters' own perception as potential leaders
- Challenges in management, lack of legitimacy toward stakeholders



Career aspirations of family business daughters

- Motivations in relation to their environment, their perceptions and their family's attitudes and wishes
- Shifts in women's opportunities in business
 - New career paradigm
 - Independence, social networks, self confidence
- Socially constructed environment that challenges daughters' participation to leadership in family firm



Posture and position of young daughters considering career development, in the context of family enterprise and in a gendered environment

- Motivation to engage in family business, vision of family firm and of their role in leadership



Qualitative interviews in the EU

- Daughters' perceptions of the gendered environment during the succession process
- In-depth interviews with 11 daughters of family firms
 - Diversified cases on the basis of individual and organizational characteristics
- Audio taping and transcription of the interviews
- Vertical and horizontal thematic analysis
 - by two researchers in parallel and independently
 - Hand analysis and qualitative analysis software 'Cassandra'¹, reproducible test

¹ created by C. Lejeune, <http://sourceforge.net/projects/cassandra-qda>



The daughters' succession process and aspirations

- Gendered family dynamics and power relations
- Presence of a brother, identified as the successor
 - No pressure regarding the firm management
 - Free to develop their own choices or pressured to play a supporting role, 'filling in' for the sons
 - Less access to resources, less well prepared
- When no brother, the daughter is the natural successor from the beginning
 - Initiation with this perspective, study / career choices
 - Integration for on-the-job training, parents' support
 - Joint management to gain experience as a leader
 - Succession planned for a long time, well prepared



Challenges in management and relationships with stakeholders

- Lack of legitimacy due to sex, in higher measure when young and in male-dominated sectors
- Succession after the son's departure
 - Difficulties with personnel management, and in relation with customers and suppliers
- Increased lack of legitimacy if *push* motivations
 - Family hierarchy, father-daughter relationship
 - Skepticism toward "the boss' daughter"
 - Increased lack of self confidence
- Scenario of planned succession
 - Good long-lasting relations, staff support, mentoring
 - Reflected respect due to their father's support
 - Resource persons in the firm, networks



Survey process in the U.S.

- Career intentions of undergraduate college women daughters of family business, in relation to their family entrepreneurial opportunities
 - Context where entrepreneurial behavior is valued and business training for women is common
- Online-administered survey
 - 8 questions about entrepreneurial intentions, within or outside the family business, and demographics
 - 8 questions about experience and perceptions of building a career in the family business
- Sample
 - Response rate 26%: 541 students (out of 2072)
 - N=138 daughters of family enterprise (26%)



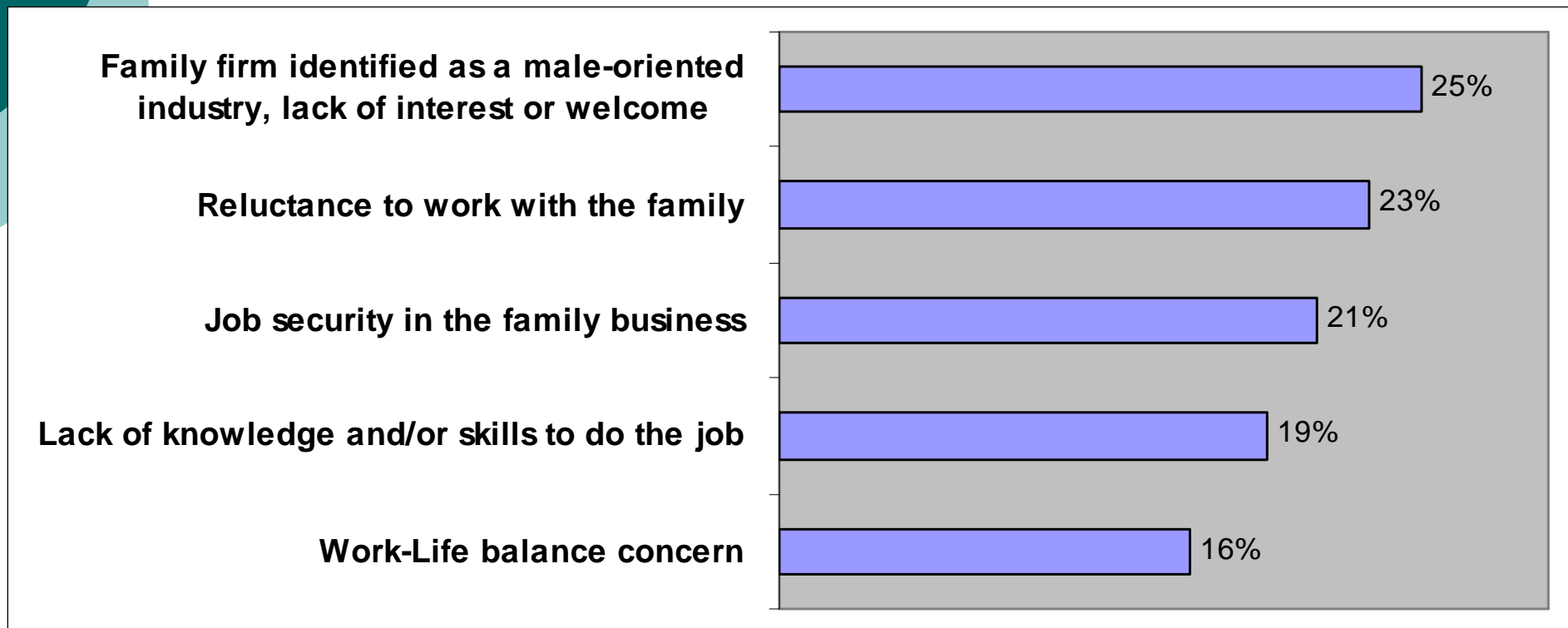
Entrepreneurial intentions

- A regression analysis revealed that daughters of family business were more interested than the others in being an entrepreneur (84% compared with 60%)

But **NOT** in the family business

- Only 12% were sure that they wanted to build their careers in the family business
- While 87% stated their intention to launch their own business separate from the family firm

Challenges to working in the family business, identified by daughters





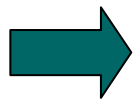
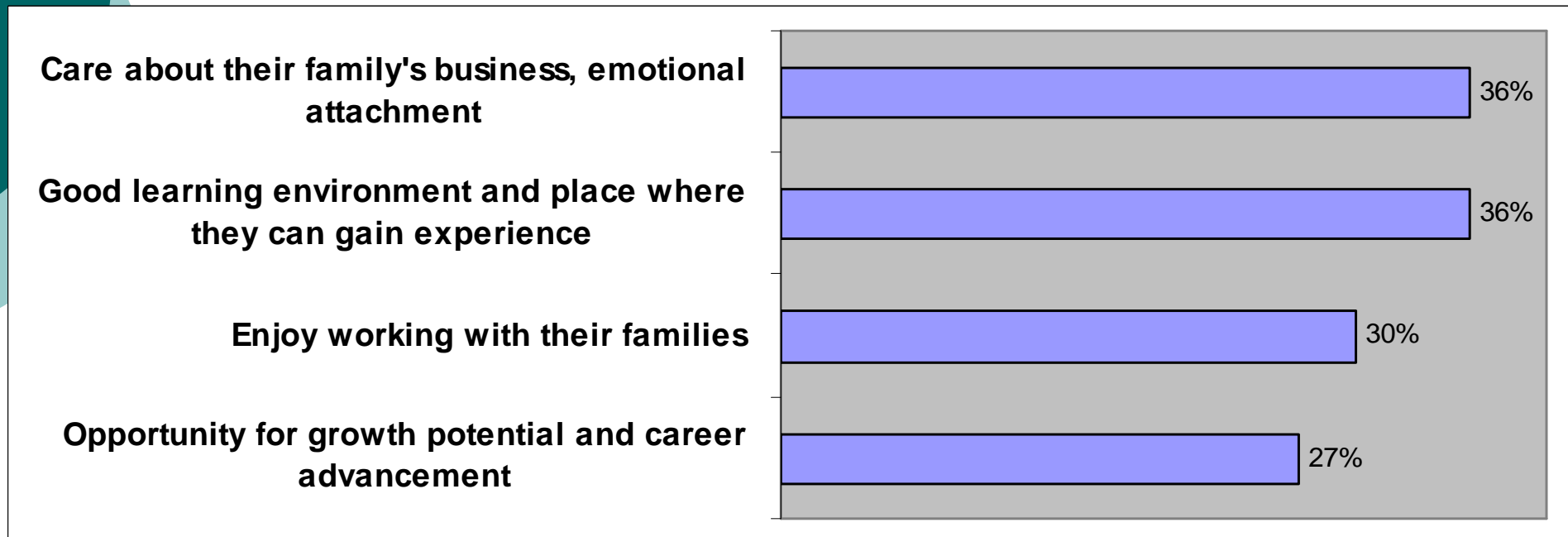
Gender and the daughter's position (I)

Conceptual lens of gender

- Challenges in considering career opportunities
- Gendered dynamics in the family, in the organization and in the society: separation and hierarchy
 - Characteristics perceived as more masculine may align with entrepreneurs' characteristics
 - Daughters' position based on the parents' wishes and the son's choices, prioritized
 - Impact on the expected role of daughters, "invisible" successor candidates
 - Lower access to resources, less well prepared, lack of legitimacy with employees and stakeholders
 - Less welcomed and less interested in industries that are « male-oriented » and « unfriendly »

Gender and the daughter's position (II)

Advantages to engage in family enterprise



Specific actions on the part of the family may impact the daughter's succession process

Degree to which women's intentions to lead counteract gender dynamics that position them at a disadvantage



A research agenda

- Intersection of generational issues, gender dynamics and women's entrepreneurship
 - Increasing opportunities through more gender egalitarian social attitudes
 - Career aspirations of today's 20-30 years olds, strong response to entrepreneurship generally
 - New vision of women emerging in the family firm milieu
- Extending research to other regions
- Investigating the sequencing of daughters' engagement with the family enterprise
 - Role of college or professional training programs
- Additional factors
 - Age, ethnicity, nationality, birth order, social status...



Conclusion

- Implications for public/private initiatives
 - Education and training programs for daughters, their families and interested stakeholders
 - Addressing the institutionalized gender assumptions for daughters, to move a family to a successful succession process
 - Helping daughters to realize their business opportunities in the family firm
 - To increase their professional options
 - But also to enhance the family business' leadership resource pool

Thank you for your attention!